

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of

BACCIOLI ET AL

Atty. Ref.: 3816-15

Serial No. unknown

Group:

Filed: November 21, 2001

Examiner:

For: TUBE PLATE FOR TUBE BUNDLES FOR CHEMICAL REACTORS AND  
HEAT EXCHANGERS IN GENERAL

\* \* \* \* \*

November 21, 2001

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

In order to place the above-identified application in better condition for  
examination, please amend the application as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please substitute the following amended claims for corresponding claims  
previously presented. A copy of the amended claims showing current revisions is  
attached.

3. Tube plate (10) according to claim 1, characterised in that the said is components (11, 12) which form the said tube plate (10) are joined to one another by means of a plurality of pins (15), which are inserted in corresponding holes provided in the respective components (11, 12).

7. Tube plate (10) according to claim 1, characterised in that it is constituted by means of a pair of semi-circular components (11, 12), which are joined to one another along a median line.

8. Tube plate (10) according to claim 1, characterised in that, in order to guarantee the sealing, seals of any type can be used.

9. Tube plate (10) according to claim 1, characterised in that the said mechanical connections between the components (11, 12) of the said plate (10) can be selected from amongst braces, screws, wedges, cams, and other types of mechanical connection.

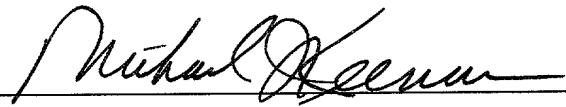
**REMARKS**

This preliminary amendment eliminates multiple dependencies in the claims, and thereby places the claims in conformance with U.S. Patent practice.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page(s) is captioned "**Version With Markings To Show Changes Made.**"

Respectfully submitted,

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**IN THE CLAIMS**

3. Tube plate (10) according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~, characterised in that the said components (11, 12) which form the said tube plate (10) are joined to one another by means of a plurality of pins (15), which are inserted in corresponding holes provided in the respective components (11, 12).

7. Tube plate (10) according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims 1,~~ characterised in that it is constituted by means of a pair of semi-circular components (11, 12), which are joined to one another along a median line.

8. Tube plate (10) according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims 1,~~ characterised in that, in order to guarantee the sealing, seals of any type can be used.

9. Tube plate (10) according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims 1,~~ characterised in that the said mechanical connections between the components (11, 12) of the said plate (10) can be selected from amongst braces, screws, wedges, cams, and other types of mechanical connection.